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# THE PHANTOM SERGEANT



**ALSO ON SALE NOW...**

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No.1040 BATTLE LEADER**

**PACKED  
WITH  
DRAMATIC  
BATTLE  
ACTION!**



**EIGHT GREAT ISSUES EVERY MONTH**

IN THE GREEN HELL OF THE JUNGLE, WOUNDS CAN BE DANGEROUS. THEY ARE SLOW TO HEAL, QUICK TO POISON AND FESTER. BUT A WOUND TO THE MIND OF A MAN CAN BE MORE DANGEROUS EVEN THAN A WOUND TO HIS BODY, FOR THERE IS NO BLOODSTAINED BANDAGE TO REVEAL THE HURT WITHIN!

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## Chapter 1. *Footsteps in the Dark*

ON 20<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 1944, SIXTY-TWO MILES SOUTH WEST OF INDAW IN NORTH BURMA, A JAPANESE SUPPLY TRAIN WAS SABOTAGED AND DERAILED BY A CHINDIT COLUMN.



THE CHINDITS SWEEPED OUT OF THE JUNGLE WITH BLAZING GUNS TO MOP UP THE ENEMY SURVIVORS.





BUT THIS WAS THE FIFTH TRAIN IN TEN DAYS WHICH THE BRITISH COLUMN HAD HIT—AND THE JAPANESE HAD TAKEN COUNTER-MEASURES.



THE CHINDIT TECHNIQUE WAS TO HIT AND RUN. PITCHED BATTLES COULD BE FATAL FOR A FORCE THAT HAD NO ARTILLERY SUPPORT AND NO SUPPLY LINES.



BUT AS THE CHINDITS MELTED BACK INTO THE JUNGLE THAT FRINGED THE CUTTING, THEIR COMMANDER STOPPED AN ENEMY BULLET.



THE CHINDIT MAJOR GAVE HIS LAST ORDER ...



LIEUTENANT GLENN WAS A VETERAN OF THE JUNGLE WAR, BUT HE WAS STILL YOUNG ENOUGH TO HAVE IDEALS.

BUT WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOU, SIR...

I GAVE YOU AN ORDER, LIEUTENANT! OBEY IT! AND GOOD LUCK, YOUNGSTER...



THE MAJOR'S DYING FINGER STIFFENED ON THE TRIGGER AS LIEUTENANT GLENN LED HIS HANDFUL OF MEN INTO THE JUNGLE.

COME ON THEN, MEN! THE MAJOR'S GIVEN US A HEAD START ON THE JAPS - LET'S USE IT!



BETWEEN THE SMALL GROUPS OF MEN WHICH HAD BEEN THE CHINDIT COLUMN, AND THE BRITISH AIR SUPPLY BASE AT BROADWAY, LAY NEARLY A HUNDRED MILES OF TREACHEROUS JUNGLE.

YOU THINK WE'LL MAKE IT BACK TO BROADWAY, LIEUTENANT?

YES, CORPORAL - AS LONG AS WE'RE NOT FOLLOWED!



THE JAPANESE TROOPS FROM THE WRECKED TRAIN MADE A DETERMINED ATTEMPT TO CHECK THE BRITISH BEFORE CONTACT WAS LOST IN THE JUNGLE.



BUT THE CHINDITS STRUCK FAST!



PRIVATE DUDLEY'S INSTINCTS WERE IN TUNE WITH JUNGLE WARFARE ALL THE TIME.



THE SWAMP WATER SOON CLOSED OVER THE THREE BODIES, THE MACHINE GUN, AND THE FOOTPRINTS OF THE CHINDIT PATROL.



THAT FIRST DAY, SEVEN MILES WAS COVERED WITHOUT INCIDENT. THE FIRST SCARE CAME AT NIGHTFALL...



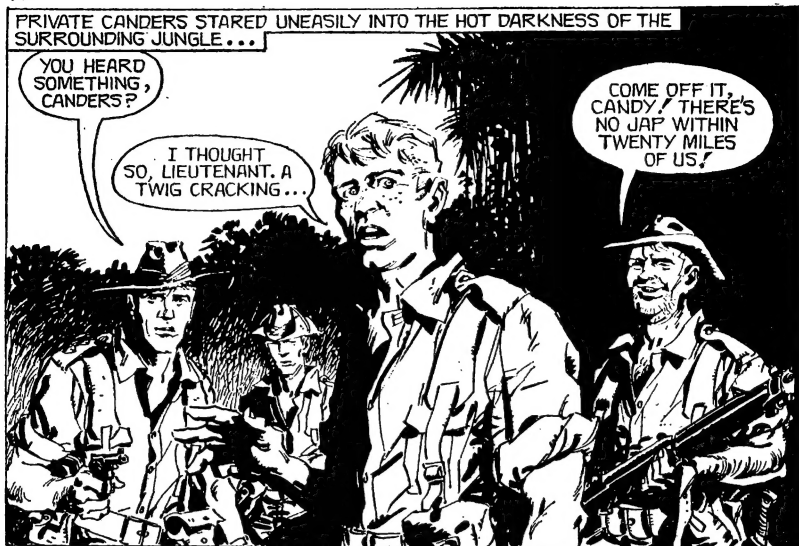


PRIVATE CANDERS STARED UNEASILY INTO THE HOT DARKNESS OF THE SURROUNDING JUNGLE...

YOU HEARD  
SOMETHING,  
CANDERS?

I THOUGHT  
SO, LIEUTENANT. A  
TWIG CRACKING...

COME OFF IT,  
CANDY! THERE'S  
NO JAP WITHIN  
TWENTY MILES  
OF US!



AT DAWN NEXT MORNING, LIEUTENANT GLENN'S PATROL MOVED ON IN GOOD HEART. THEY HAD NO CAUSE TO WORRY... OR SO THEY THOUGHT...

KEEP YOUR  
EARS PINNED  
BACK, MEN.

WE'LL DO THAT—  
BUT WE'RE NOT  
GOING TO HEAR  
OWT! IF THERE  
WAS ANYONE  
FOLLOWING US,  
THEY'D HAVE  
JUMPED US IN  
THE NIGHT.



THE SECOND SCARE CAME NEXT DAY, AND THIS TIME IT WAS THE TOUGH LITTLE WELSH PRIVATE WHOSE EARS CAUGHT THE FAINT SOUND...



THE PATROL MOVED ON AGAIN. THEY CHAFFED PRIVATE LLOYD, BUT THEY WERE UNEASY—AND THEY HAD REASON TO BE...



BUT ON THE FIFTH DAY OF THE MARCH, TWO MEN GAVE THE ALARM AND ONE OF THEM WAS THE STOLID CORPORAL WILLIAMSON HIMSELF...



LIEUTENANT GLENN DROPPED TO ONE KNEE IN THE COVER OF THE FOLIAGE AND HISSED AT HIS MEN...



THE PATROL TREKKED ON, TALKING LOUDLY. FOUR MEN AND THE LIEUTENANT CROUCHED IN THE SHADOWS BEHIND IT.



WHEN THE PATROL AND ITS MYSTERIOUS SHADOW WERE HALF-A-MILE AHEAD, THE FIVE MEN SPREAD OUT TO SEARCH.

MOVE SOFTLY, MEN—AND KEEP YOUR EYES SKINNED!

HERE, SIR!



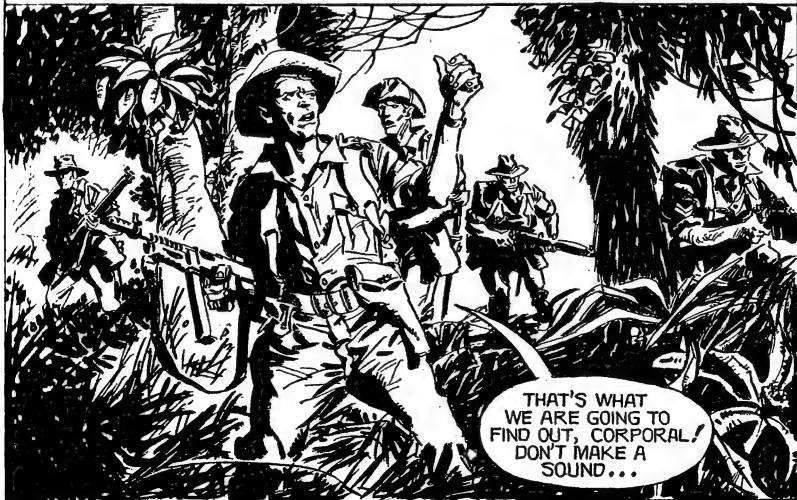
SAP WAS STILL GLISTENING ON THE FRESHLY-TORN STEM AS LIEUTENANT GLENN BENT TO EXAMINE IT...

THAT SETTLES IT! SOMEONE PASSED THIS WAY IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES.

SOMEONE—BUT WHO? IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! WHY WOULD A LONE JAP SHADOW US FOR FOUR DAYS?



GRIMLY THE FIVE MEN FANNED OUT TO FORM A HUMAN NET, SAFETY CATCHES OFF AND FINGERS ON TRIGGERS.



SOMEWHERE, DIRECTLY AHEAD, WAS THE UNKNOWN WHO HAD BEEN DOGGING THEIR FOOTSTEPS THROUGH FOUR LONG DAYS...



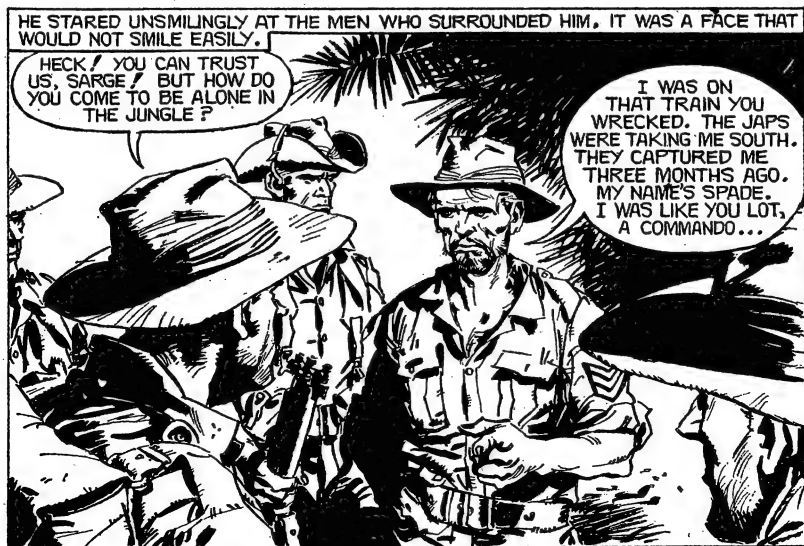
SUDDENLY, A BOOT SNAPPED ON A TWIG. FIVE MEN LUNGED TOWARDS THE SHARP SOUND...







## Chapter 2. The Take-Over



LIEUTENANT GLENN CORRECTED THE THIN MAN WITHOUT TAKING MUCH NOTICE OF THE MISTAKE HE HAD MADE.

YOU MEAN  
A CHINDIT, DON'T  
YOU?

YEAH, OF COURSE.  
A CHINDIT. WELL,  
I ESCAPED WHEN  
THE TRAIN BLEW.  
LOOK, IF YOU WANT  
TO INTERROGATE ME,  
WHY NOT DO IT ON THE  
MARCH? STANDING  
AROUND IN THE  
JUNGLE CAN BE  
DICEY...



THE PATROL MOVED ON, AND THE MAN WHO HAD JOINED IT FROM THE DARK JUNGLE WENT WITH IT.

WHY SHOULD WE  
INTERROGATE YOU,  
SERGEANT? WE'RE  
GLAD TO HAVE YOU  
WITH US.

I'LL SAY WE  
ARE! HE LOOKS  
A HARD CASE,  
THAT SERGEANT  
SPADE...



AYE, THE  
LIEUTENANT'S OKAY,  
BUT HE'S YOUNG. HE  
COULD DO WITH A  
VETERAN TO HOLD  
HIS HAND.

NEXT MORNING, AS THE CHINDIT PATROL MARCHED ON THROUGH THE THICK JUNGLE, SERGEANT SPADE MADE A SUGGESTION.

TREAD ON ME  
IF I'M OUT OF LINE,  
MISTER GLENN...  
BUT SHOULDN'T WE  
HAVE A COUPLE OF  
FLANKERS OUT  
AHEAD.

GOOD IDEA,  
SERGEANT.  
SEE TO IT,  
CORPORAL...



IT WAS ONLY THE FIRST OF THE SUGGESTIONS THE THIN MAN MADE IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED.

COME ON, MEN— WHY ARE YOU HANGING BACK?

SORRY, MISTER GLENN. IT'S MY FAULT. I THOUGHT YOU'D KEEP US ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE RIDGE. THE DAWN SUN BOUNCING OFF A BACKPLATE OR A MESS TIN COULD GIVE AWAY OUR POSITION TO THE JAPS...



SERGEANT SPADE WAS A VETERAN. HE SEEMED TO NEED NO SLEEP. THOSE BURNING EYES IN THE BONY FACE NEVER SEEMED TO CLOSE.

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T DISTURB YOU, MISTER GLENN— BUT A LOOKOUT IN THAT FORKED TREE COULD SEE FIVE MILES INSTEAD OF FIVE FACES.

UUUH— MAYBE...



DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS, THE MEN OF THE CHINDIT PATROL HAD COME TO RESPECT THE ADVICE GIVEN IN THAT LOW, HOARSE VOICE.



YOUNG LIEUTENANT GLENN WAS UNEASILY AWARE THAT HIS HOLD ON THE MEN HAD SLACKENED EVER SINCE SERGEANT SPADE HAD JOINED THE PATROL.





ON THE TENTH DAY OF THE MARCH, TOWARDS NOON, THE JUNGLE SUDDENLY THINNED...



THE YOUNG LIEUTENANT WAS TIRED, HOT AND IRRITABLE. HE HAD TAKEN ENOUGH SUGGESTIONS. HIS RESENTMENT BROKE THROUGH...



THE NATIVE WHO HAD WANDERED INTO THE JUNGLE STOPPED DEAD SUDDENLY, FRIGHTENED EYES ON THE PISTOL IN THE YOUNG OFFICER'S HAND...



THE BURMAN WAS THE HEADMAN OF THE VILLAGE. AT GLENN'S QUESTION, HE BROKE INTO HOT PROTESTATIONS OF FRIENDLINESS...



THAT WAS WHEN SERGEANT SEADE MADE HIS NEXT SUGGESTION — AND LIEUTENANT GLENN ANGRILY OVERRULED IT.



LEFT TO HIMSELF, LIEUTENANT GLENN MIGHT HAVE DECIDED NOT TO ENTER THE VILLAGE. HE KNEW THE DANGERS AS WELL AS SERGEANT SPADE DID...



BUT THE THIN SERGEANT'S INSISTENT VOICE HAD NEEDED THE YOUNG OFFICER ONCE TOO OFTEN. HE LED HIS PATROL DEFIANTLY FORWARD - INTO AN AMBUSH.



HIDDEN EYES WATCHED THE CHINDITS AS THEY SHUFFLED INTO THE SILENT STREET, THEY WERE ALL UNEASY, EVEN LIEUTENANT GLENN.



SUDDENLY THE TREACHEROUS STAMMER OF THE JAPANESE MACHINE GUN, HIDDEN THIRTY YARDS FROM THE CHINDIT PATROL, RIPPED OPEN THE HOT SILENCE.



THE SERGEANT'S HARSH VOICE SWEEPED THE MEN INTO THE LEE OF THE STONE TROUGH. THEY OBEYED HIM INSTINCTIVELY...



WHEN LIEUTENANT GLENN FOUND HIS VOICE, CORPORAL WILLIAMSON AND THE MEN IGNORED HIM...



SERGEANT SPADE HAD VIRTUALLY TAKEN COMMAND OF THE CHINDIT PATROL...





THERE WAS A THATCHED HUT TWENTY YARDS FROM THE CROUCHING MEN ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE STREET FROM THE HIDDEN JAP MACHINE GUN. THE SERGEANT RATCHED IT WITH BULLETS PECKING AT HIS HEELS.



AS THE SERGEANT RAN BACK, LIEUTENANT GLENN MADE ONE LAST ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN HIS AUTHORITY. IT WAS NO GOOD...



THE YOUNG LIEUTENANT WATCHED IN SILENCE AS THE MEN TURNED TO SERGEANT SPADE.



THE SMOKE FROM THE BURNING HUT WAS DRIFTING THICKLY ACROSS THE VILLAGE STREET, BLOTING OUT THE SUNLIGHT.



LIUTENANT SPADE HAD ENGINEERED THE  
BETTER CHANCE OF ESCAPE FOR THE  
GUARD PATROL. IT WAS HE WHO GAVE  
THE FINAL ORDER NOW...



THE JAPS ACROSS THE STREET WERE  
FIRING BLIND AT THE DIM FIGURES IN  
THE PALL OF SMOKE...



ONLY ONE MAN WAS HIT BY THE LAST WILD JAPANESE MACHINE GUN BURST, AND  
THAT MAN WAS LIUTENANT GLENN.



THE YOUNG OFFICER DROPPED ON ONE KNEE, SICK WITH PAIN, SERGEANT SPADE HAD TURNED BACK. HE JUST STOOD THERE, LOOKING DOWN AT GLENN...



THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, DELIBERATELY, THE THIN MAN TURNED ON HIS HEEL AND RACED AFTER THE REST OF THE PATROL.



ALONE IN THE SMOKE AND THE WHIPLASH FURY OF THE BULLETS, A BITTER  
ANGEL DRAGGED LIEUTENANT GLENN TO HIS FEET.



SERGEANT SPADE HAD DELIBERATELY DESERTED A WOUNDED MAN, AN OFFICER.  
LIEUTENANT GLENN WANTED TO KNOW WHY...



THE MEN HAD STOPPED FIFTY-YARDS INSIDE THE JUNGLE, THEY WERE TALKING ANXIOUSLY ABOUT THEIR YOUNG OFFICER. BUT THERE WAS NOTHING ANXIOUS ABOUT THE ONE WORD SERGEANT SPADE SPOKE...

I HEARD HIM CRY OUT WHEN WE WERE RUNNING THROUGH THE SMOKE, SARGE, BUT I THOUGHT HE WAS OKAY. HE WAS FOLLOWING US...

WE'LL HAVE TO GO BACK FOR THE LIEUTENANT, SARGE...

NO!



IN THAT LOW, HARSH VOICE, SERGEANT SPADE DELIBERATELY TOLD A DEADLY LIE...

LIEUTENANT GLENN IS DEAD! I STOPPED BACK THERE AND MADE SURE. HE'S DEAD! THERE'S NOTHING TO GO BACK FOR!



LIEUTENANT GLENN'S MEN SHOOK THEIR HEADS, BUT THEY TURNED AWAY. SERGEANT SPADE HAD TAKEN CONTROL OF THEM...

YUCK, HE WAS  
A GOOD KID, THE  
LIEUTENANT...

WELL, IF  
YOU MADE SURE  
HE WAS DEAD,  
SARGE...

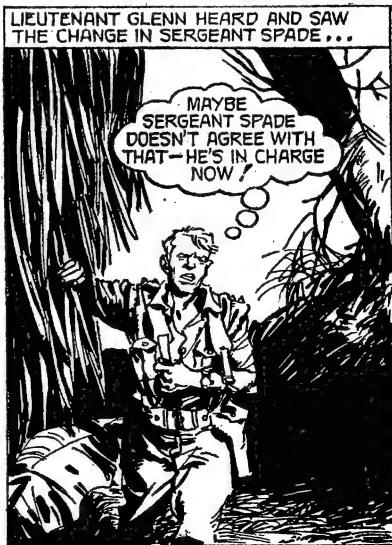
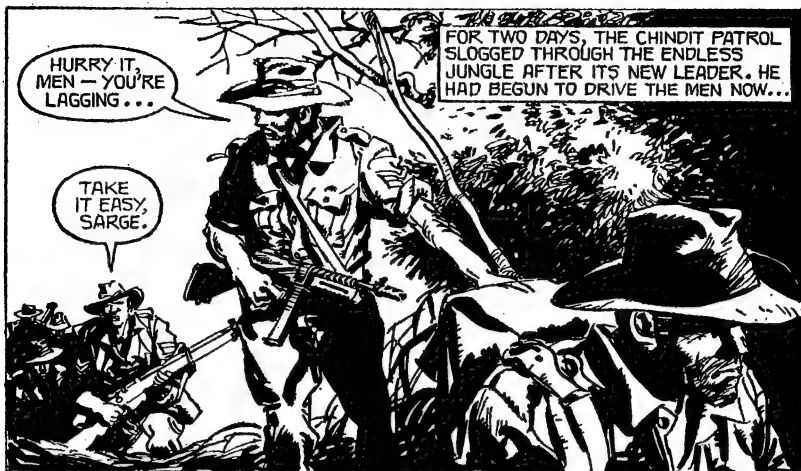
LET'S GET  
GOING NOW. WE'VE  
GOT A LONG WAY  
TO GO, BUT I'LL  
LEAD YOU.

THROUGH THE PAIN OF HIS TORN ARM, THROUGH THE FOG OF WEARINESS AND DOUBT IN HIS SHOCKED BRAIN, LIEUTENANT GLENN SAW THE TRUTH...

THAT WAS WHAT  
YOU WANTED ALL ALONG,  
WASN'T IT, SERGEANT SPADE,  
FROM THE FIRST DAY YOU  
JOINED US — TO LEAD  
MY MEN!



## Chapter 3. The Crooked Compass



THE YOUNG LIEUTENANT'S WOUND WAS LESS SERIOUS THAN HE HAD THOUGHT. HE HAD MADE UP HIS MIND TO FOLLOW HIS MEN AS SPADE HAD FOLLOWED THEM, SECRETLY, THROUGH THE JUNGLE...



ON THE NEXT DAY, THE TRACK THE PATROL WAS FOLLOWING FORKED INTO TWO. SERGEANT SPADE MADE A CURIOUS CHOICE...



PRIVATE DUDLEY FACED THE THIN MAN UNEASILY. THE COLD EYES SUDDENLY TOOK FIRE...

WHAT'S  
EATING YOU,  
DUDLEY?

NOTHING, SARGE— ONLY  
BROADWAY'S DUE NORTH BY MY  
RECKONING, AND THE SUN'S ON  
OUR LEFT SHOULDER. I WAS  
JUST THINKING...



CURTLY, SERGEANT SPADE TURNED ON  
HIS HEEL. THERE WAS STEEL IN HIS  
VOICE.

DON'T THINK,  
DUDLEY. I TOLD YOU  
WE'RE TAKING THE RIGHT  
FORK. I'M LEADING THIS  
PATROL, AREN'T I?



LIEUTENANT GLENN HAD WATCHED THE INCIDENT FROM COVER. IT CONFIRMED A SUSPICION WHICH HAD BEEN GROWING IN HIS MIND.



THE SUSPICION BECAME A CERTAINTY TWO DAYS LATER, WHEN SERGEANT SPADE LED THE MEN STILL FARTHER FROM THE MAIN TRACK...



THIS TIME, THE MEN MADE A STAND...



SERGEANT SPADE SHOWED THE COMPASS GRIMLY TO CORPORAL WILLIAMSON...



HIDDEN IN THE DARK FOLIAGE ABOVE THE TRACK, LIEUTENANT GLENN KNEW THAT THE TIME HAD COME FOR ACTION.



THIRTY HOURS LATER, BUT LONG AFTER DARKNESS HAD FALLEN, SERGEANT SPADE CALLED A HALT AND THE EXHAUSTED MEN SLUMPED TO THE GROUND.



LIEUTENANT GLENN WAITED FOR THIRTY MINUTES.



SILENTLY, THE YOUNG OFFICER EASED OUT OF THE SHADOWY JUNGLE AND PASSED THE DOZING PRIVATE CANDERS.



SERGEANT SPADE WAS LYING ON HIS SIDE, EYES CLOSED. THE COMPASS RESTED ON THE GRASS AN INCH FROM HIS RIGHT HAND.



AS LIEUTENANT GLENN'S FINGERS CLOSED ON THE COMPASS, PRIVATE CANDERS COUGHED AND JERKED AWAKE. GLENN FROZE...



THE YOUNG PRIVATE LOOKED UP, SAW LIEUTENANT GLENN. HIS EYES WIDENED. GLENN  
 LEAPED TOWARDS HIM, HISSING A WARNING...



GLENN'S HAND CLAMPT OVER THE YOUNG SOLDIER'S MOUTH JUST IN TIME. HE  
 SPOKE IN A HURRY WITH...





SERGEANT SPADE HAD STIRRED UNEASILY, BUT HE DID NOT WAKE. LIEUTENANT GLENN TOOK HIS HAND AWAY FROM THE YOUNG PRIVATE'S LIPS.



MINUTES LATER, IN THE SHADOWS, PRIVATE CANDERS WAS STARING IN BEWILDERMENT INTO THE GRIM FACE OF LIEUTENANT GLENN...



THE YOUNG OFFICER RAISED HIS HAND  
AND SAID IT...

LOOK — SPADE'S COMPASS!  
HE USED IT TO PERSUADE YOU  
HE WAS HEADING DUE NORTH  
FOR BROADWAY, BUT HE  
COULD HAVE FIXED IT,  
SO LET'S CHECK...



HE HELD SERGEANT SPADE'S COMPASS  
ALONGSIDE HIS OWN...

I THOUGHT SO!  
SPADE'S COMPASS IS  
TWENTY DEGREES OFF  
TRUE! HE'S NOT BEEN  
LEADING YOU TOWARDS  
BROADWAY AT ALL!



LIEUTENANT GLENN TURNED GRIMLY BACK TOWARDS  
THE CLEARING...

BUT WHAT  
SPADE UP TO HIM,  
"HIT?" WHERE'S HE  
LEADING US?



WE'RE GOING TO FIND  
ANSWERS TO THOSE  
QUESTIONS, CANDERS,  
BUT WE'LL HAVE TO  
PLAY IT CLOSE! IF  
I JUST CONFRONTED  
SPADE, HE'D DENY  
EVERYTHING...

ALL WAS SILENT STILL IN THE CLEARING. THE SENTRY HAD NOT BEEN MISSED...



IN THE GREY LIGHT BEFORE DAWN, SERGEANT SPADE GOT TO HIS FEET...





THE DAWN LIGHT SHOWED A BROAD AND ROUGH-PAVED ROAD CURVING THROUGH THE JUNGLE...



HECK!  
IT'S A JAP  
MILITARY  
ROAD!

IF WE'VE GOT  
TO CROSS IT, SARGE,  
WE'D BETTER MAKE  
OUR RUN AFTER  
THIS TRUCK'S  
PASSED.

CORPORAL WILLIAMSON'S VOICE WAS SHARP, BUT SERGEANT SPADE'S MIND SEEMED FAR AWAY.



THE ROAD'S CLEAR.  
OKAY, SARGE P. COME  
ON, BLOKES, BEFORE  
ANOTHER JAP TRUCK  
COMES...

WHAT P  
OH YEAH...

THE SERGEANT MOVED ON DRUGGED FEET ACROSS THE ROAD AFTER THE MEN...



WHAT'S UP WITH  
THE SARGE? HE  
LOOKED AS THOUGH  
HE WAS SEEING  
GHOSTS!

COME  
ON, SARGE!  
I THOUGHT YOU  
WERE LEADING  
US?

THE NANT GLENN WATCHED FROM THE COVER OF THE TREES. HE KNEW NOW THAT HIS QUESTIONS WOULD BE ANSWERED VERY SOON.



THE CHINDITS HAD PUSHED ON INTO THE JUNGLE, BUT THEY HAD GONE ONLY FIFTY YARDS FROM THE ROAD WHEN THEY CAME TO A DEAD STOP.



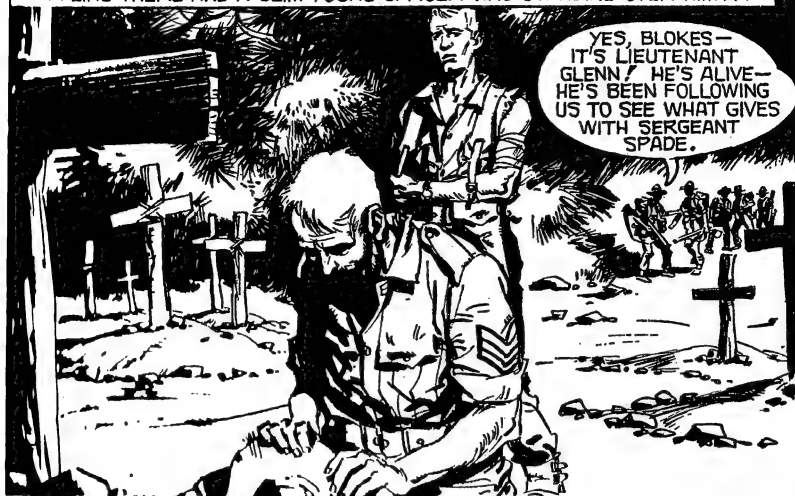
FIFTY YARDS AHEAD, ACROSS OPEN GROUND, A HIGH BARBED WIRE FENCE AND A WATCHTOWER LOOMED THROUGH THE JUNGLE MIST ...



THE MEN WHEELED AROUND AT CANDERS' QUESTION. AS THEY RAN BACK THROUGH THE TREES ...



THE LITTLE CLEARING WAS A ROUGH GRAVEYARD. SERGEANT SPADE WAS DIGGING THERE AND A SLIM YOUNG OFFICER WAS STANDING OVER HIM...



SERGEANT SPADE'S EYES BLAZED WITH FANATICAL GRIEF.





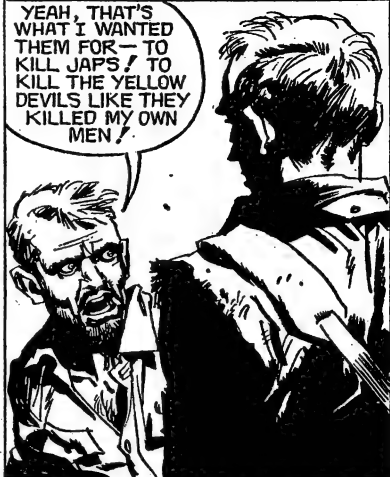
AT LONG LAST, LIEUTENANT GLENN HAD AN ANSWER TO HIS QUESTIONS...

SO THAT'S  
WHAT YOU WANTED  
MY MEN FOR,  
SERGEANT  
SPADE.



SERGEANT SPADE LOOKED FIERCELY AT THE YOUNG OFFICER, BUT HE SEEMED NOT TO RECOGNISE HIM.

YEAH, THAT'S  
WHAT I WANTED  
THEM FOR— TO  
KILL JAPS / TO  
KILL THE YELLOW  
DEVILS LIKE THEY  
KILLED MY OWN  
MEN!

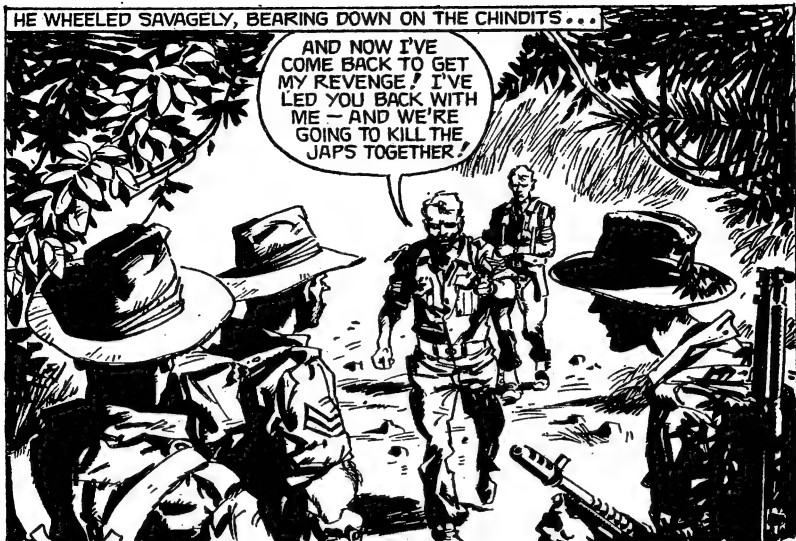


THE THIN MAN WAS LOCKED INSIDE THE BLIND HELL OF HIS BITTERNESS...

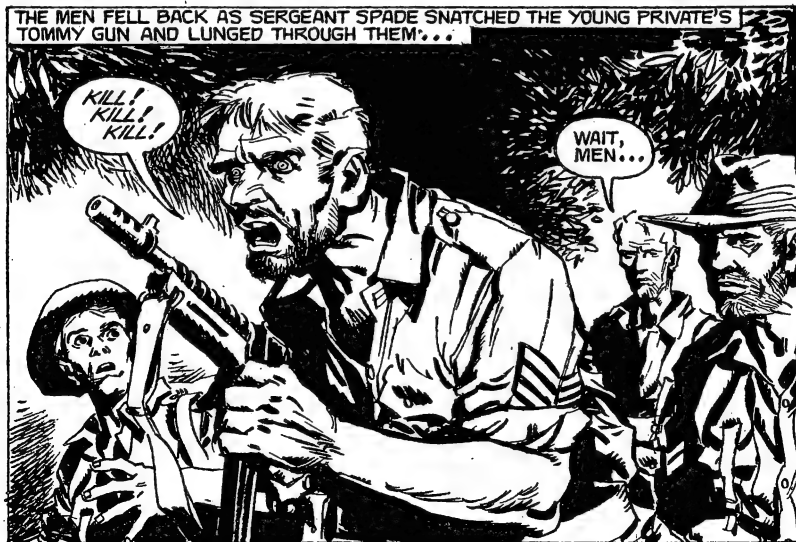
FOR THREE YEARS  
I SUFFERED IN THAT  
JAP PRISON CAMP. I WATCHED  
MY MEN DYING LIKE ANIMALS  
WHILE THOSE YELLOW DEVILS  
STOOD BY AND GRINNED...



HE WHEELED SAVAGELY, BEARING DOWN ON THE CHINDITS...



THE MEN FELL BACK AS SERGEANT SPADE SNATCHED THE YOUNG PRIVATE'S TOMMY GUN AND LUNGED THROUGH THEM...



LIEUTENANT GLENN CHECKED HIS MEN QUIETLY AS THE GAUNT FIGURE RAN TOWARDS THE BARBED WIRE FENCE OF THE JAPANESE PRISON CAMP...



SERGEANT SPADE'S EYES BLAZED WITH A FIRE THAT HAD BEEN SMOULDERING FOR THREE LONG, BITTER YEARS AND HAD AT LAST BURST INTO SAVAGE FLAME...



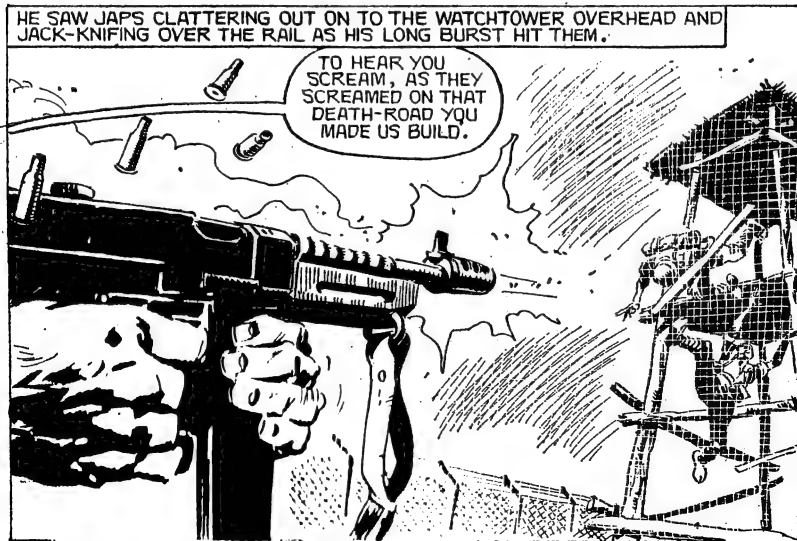
HE SAW A GROUP OF JAPANESE SOLDIERS AT THE OPEN GATE OF THE PRISON CAMP...



HE SAW THE JAPS WHIPPING IN THE GATEWAY AS HIS FIRST BURST CUT THEM DOWN.



HE SAW JAPS CLATTERING OUT ON TO THE WATCHTOWER OVERHEAD AND JACK-KNIFING OVER THE RAIL AS HIS LONG BURST HIT THEM.



HE SAW ACROSS THE COMPOUND A GROUP OF JAP SOLDIERS JERKING ON HIS BULLETS LIKE MARIONETTES ON A STRING.



HE SAW TWO JAPS LOOMING AHEAD OF HIM AT THE CORNER OF THE HUT. THEY CRUMPLED UNDER THE BUTT OF HIS GUN.



HE SAW A JAP BLOCKING HIS WAY IN THE CORRIDOR OF THE HUT, AND FALLING AWAY BEFORE HIS BULLETS...



HE SAW A JAP BLOCKING HIS WAY IN THE CORRIDOR OF THE HUT, AND FALLING AWAY BEFORE HIS BULLETS...



HE SAW THE HATED SIGN ON THE DOOR TO THE OFFICE AS HE KICKED IT SAVAGELY OPEN AND FLUNG AWAY HIS GUN...

AND HE'S NOT  
GOING TO DIE EASILY—  
WITH A BULLET IN  
HIS HEART.  
BECAUSE...



HE SAW, WITH A LAST TERRIBLE SPASM OF HATRED, THE FAT FACE OF THE CAMP COMMANDANT QUIVERING WITH FEAR LIKE A CANDLE FLAME IN A DRAUGHT.



I'M GOING  
TO KILL YOU WITH MY  
BARE HANDS, COMMANDANT  
DEVIL—I'M GOING TO WRING  
MY REVENGE OUT OF YOU—  
AND THEN I'M  
FINISHED!

AS HE CLUTCHED FORWARD AT THAT HATED FACE, A GREAT BLAZE OF LIGHT EXPLODED IN THE EYES OF SERGEANT SPADE. THAT WAS THE LAST THING SERGEANT SPADE SAW...



A SINGLE HIGH CRY ECHOED ACROSS THE CAMP AND THE CLEARING. WHEN THE ECHOES HAD DIED AWAY, LIEUTENANT GLENN LED HIS MEN FORWARD...

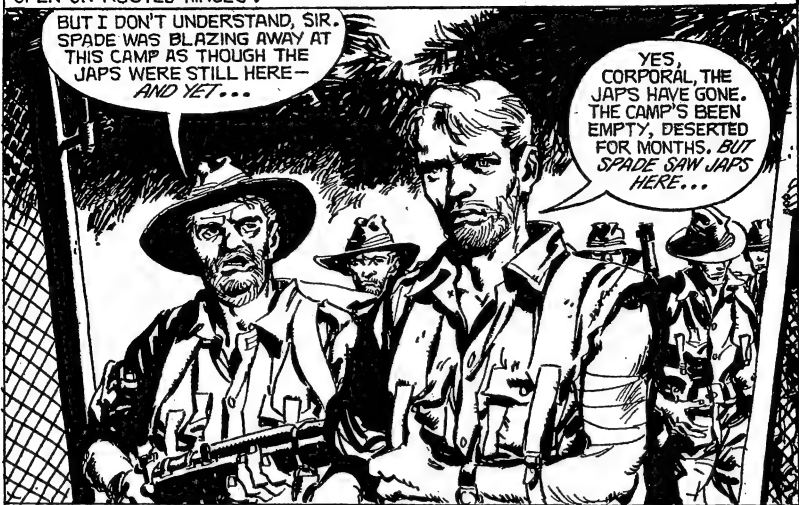




THE GATE IN THE RAGGED BARBED WIRE FENCE OF THE PRISON CAMP WAS LYING OPEN ON RUSTED HINGES.

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND, SIR. SPADE WAS BLAZING AWAY AT THIS CAMP AS THOUGH THE JAPS WERE STILL HERE—  
AND YET...

YES, CORPORAL, THE JAPS HAVE GONE. THE CAMP'S BEEN EMPTY, DESERTED FOR MONTHS. BUT SPADE SAW JAPS HERE...



THERE WERE WEEDS IN THE COMPOUND WHERE NO BOOT HAD TRODDEN IN A LONG TIME...

HE SPENT THREE HORRIFYING YEARS IN THIS JAP P.O.W. CAMP, WATCHING HIS MEN DIE. THEN HE WAS SHIFTED OUT. WHEN WE BLEW THE TRAIN THE JAPS WERE TRANSPORTING HIM ON—  
HE ESCAPED...



THERE WERE GAPING HOLES IN THE ROOF OF THE LONG-DISUSED HUT — WHICH HAD ONCE HOUSED THE CAMP COMMANDANT.

WHEN HE FIRST JOINED US, HE SAID HE'D BEEN A COMMANDO, REMEMBER? I OUGHT TO HAVE REALISED THEN THAT HE'D BEEN TAKEN PRISONER THREE YEARS AGO, BEFORE THE CHINDITS WERE FORMED.



AND IN THE EMPTY, DERELICT OFFICE OF THE JAPANESE COMMANDANT, SERGEANT SPADE WAS LYING SPRAWLED ACROSS THE DUSTY DESK.

WELL, SERGEANT SPADE DIDN'T NEED US, POOR DEVIL. HE GOT HIS REVENGE WITHOUT US — *EVEN IF THE ONLY JAPS HE KILLED WERE THE ONES IN HIS OWN SICK MIND.*



THERE WAS A TATTERED PHOTOGRAPH OF THE JAPANESE CAMP COMMANDANT IN HIS HANDS. IT HAD PROBABLY BEEN LEFT ON THE DESK IN THE EMPTY ROOM WHEN THE JAPANESE LEFT THE CAMP. THE PHOTOGRAPH WAS CRUSHED BETWEEN SERGEANT SPADE'S RIGID FINGERS...



HE DROVE HIMSELF TOO HARD TO GET HIS REVENGE. WHEN IT CAME TO IT, HIS HEART COULD NOT BEAR THE STRAIN.

# STANDING ORDERS

SERGEANT ARNOLD CUFF WAS MID-UPPER GUNNER IN A LANCASTER BOMBER. AS AIRCREW HE KNEW HIS LIFE WAS LIKELY TO BE SHORT. HE MEANT IT TO BE A MERRY ONE...

10  
92M  
AIR FORCE  
PASSES  
BE SHOWN

*By Order  
of the Air Force!*

WHAT DOES HOPKINS  
WANT? IF HE  
MAKES ME LATE...



HOPKINS WAS THE BASE'S PHYSICAL TRAINING INSTRUCTOR, AND HE TOOK HIS DUTIES VERY SERIOUSLY. HE WAS ALSO THE SWORN ENEMY OF SERGEANT ARNOLD CUFF...

DON'T BE TOO LATE BACK TONIGHT, SERGEANT CUFF. THERE'S A THREE MILE RUN FOR AIR-CREW IN THE MORNING.

IS THERE?  
OH, DON'T YOU  
WORRY ABOUT  
ME, SERGEANT  
HOPKINS!

THE LAST THING ARNOLD CUFF WAS THINKING ABOUT THAT NIGHT WAS A THREE MILE RUN...

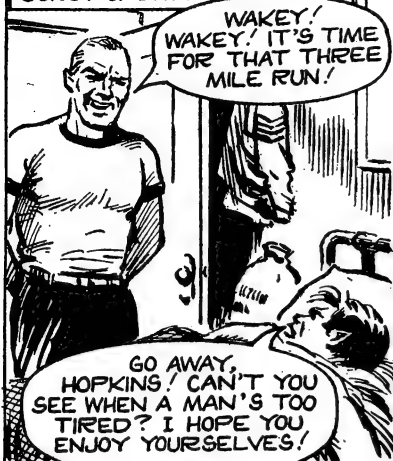


AS USUAL IT WAS DAWN WHEN HE GOT BACK...

I MUST HAVE BEEN  
DAFT TO HAVE LEFT  
IT THIS LATE COMING  
BACK TO BASE...



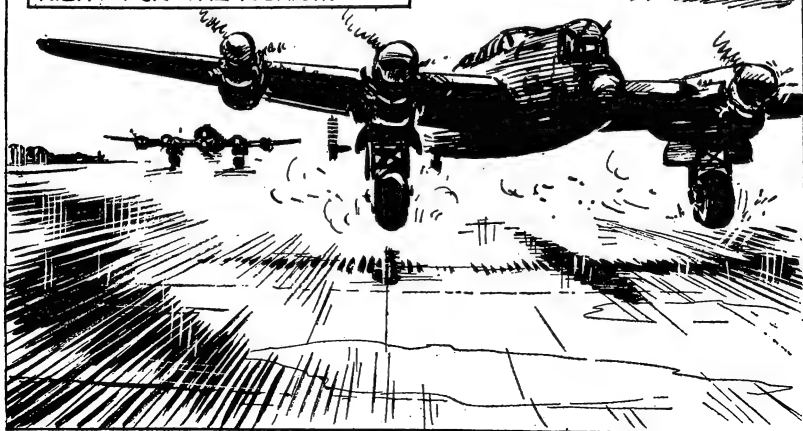
HE HAD ONLY JUST CLIMBED INTO BED WHEN THE DOOR BURST OPEN...



YOU'RE REFUSING AN ORDER! I'LL 'AVE YOU UP BEFORE THE WING-COMMANDER FOR THIS!



AFTER A LONG SLEEP, AND A LEISURELY LUNCH, CUFF WAS READY FOR TAKE OFF THAT NIGHT FOR THE RUHR...



THE VAST FORMATION OF  
BOMBERS HEADED ACROSS  
FRANCE...



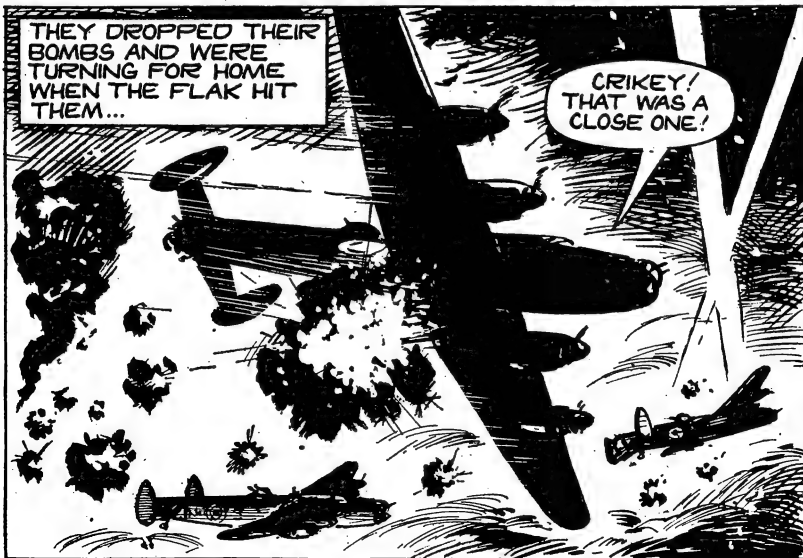
HOPKINS  
NEARLY BLEW A  
GASKET WHEN  
YOU NEVER  
TURNED UP FOR  
THAT RUN. HE'LL  
BE GUNNING FOR  
YOU NOW, MY  
LAD!

I'M NOT  
WORRIED ABOUT  
ABOUT HOPKINS,  
SKIPPER. THERE'S  
NOTHING HE CAN  
DO TO ME...

LANCASTER 'O-OBOE'  
ARRIVED OVER THE  
TARGET EXACTLY  
ON SCHEDULE...

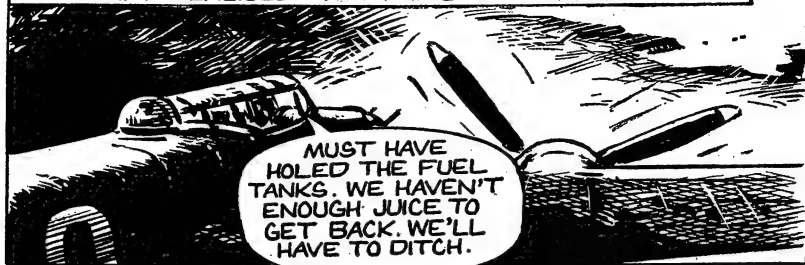


THEY DROPPED THEIR  
BOMBS AND WERE  
TURNING FOR HOME  
WHEN THE FLAK HIT  
THEM...

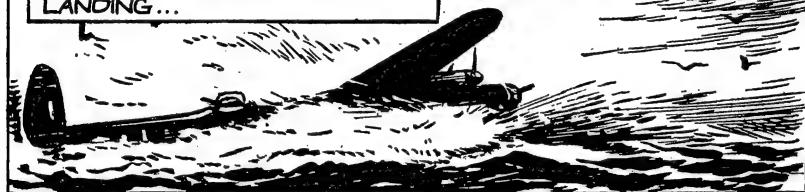


CRUIKEY!  
THAT WAS A  
CLOSE ONE!

IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE FRENCH COAST CAME WITHIN SIGHT THAT THEY REALISED THEY HAD BEEN DAMAGED...



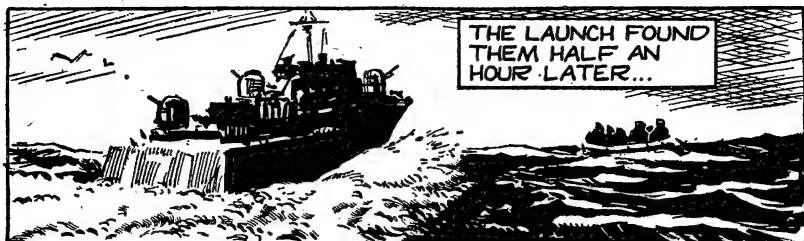
THE PILOT PUT THEM DOWN ON THE CHANNEL IN A PERFECT LANDING...

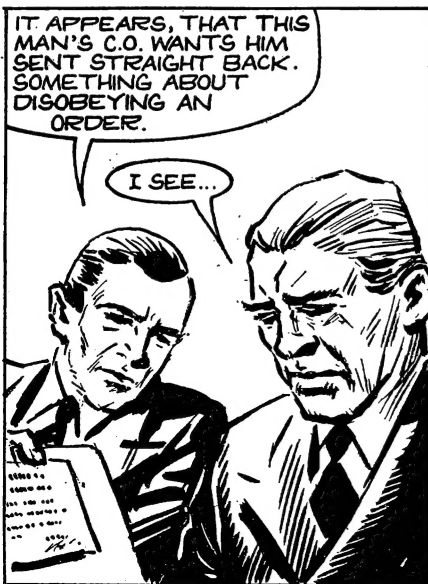


WITHIN SECONDS THEY WERE SAFELY IN THE DINGHY...









ARNOLD CUFF COULD NOT BELIEVE HIS EARS.



WHEN HE GOT BACK, CUFF WAS SENT STRAIGHT TO THE C.O. AFTER A SEVERE REPRIMAND AND THE LOSS OF HIS TWO WEEKS' SURVIVOR'S LEAVE HE WAS DISMISSED...



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKIN', CUFF. WE ARE THE SAME RANK. BUT IT WASN'T MY ORDER. IT WAS THE WINGCO'S. YOU REALLY OUGHT TO READ STANDING ORDERS. SAVE YOU A LOT TROUBLE!



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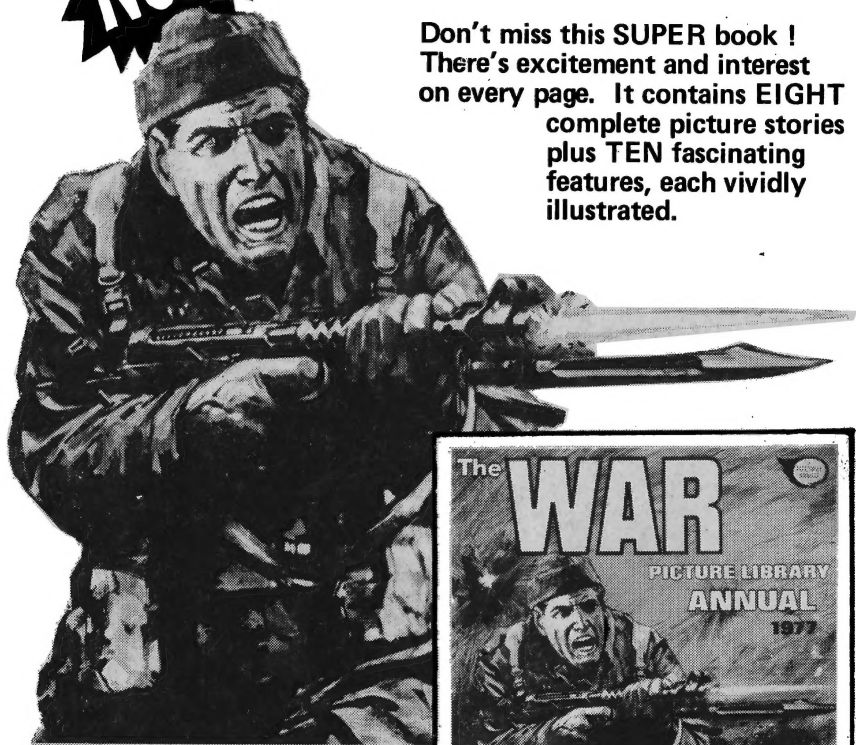


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